

Office of Indian Affairs collection L443

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts
140 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204
317-232-3671

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Summary Information

Repository	Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Cass, Lewis, 1782-1866
Creator	Johnston, John
Creator	Stickney, B. F.
Title	Office of Indian Affairs collection
Date	1815-1821
Extent	0.6 Cubic feet 1 medium oversize box
Language	English

Preferred Citation

Office of Indiana Affairs collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

Historical Note

In 1775, the Continental Congress created a committee on Indian Affairs. In 1789, Indian affairs were put under the authority of the Department of War and territorial governors served as district superintendents. In 1806, a superintendent of Indian trade was appointed to oversee government trading posts and this official regularly corresponded with the Secretary of War. After Congress discontinued the government trading posts, Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun, appointed Thomas L. McKenny commissioner of what would become the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1824. By an act of Congress in 1832 the BIA was given legal authority over the government's trade and treaty activities with the Indians and in 1849, the BIA was transferred to the Department of the Interior. The agency was known by a variety of names and didn't officially take the title, "Bureau of Indian Affairs" until 1947.

Sources:

"Bureau of Indian Affairs." *US Department Of The Interior: Indian Affairs*. Accessed March 15, 2017. <https://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/>.

Kutler, Stanley I., ed. *Dictionary of American History*. 3rd ed. Vol. 1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains photostats of letters copied from the records of the Office of Indian Affairs and the Office of Indian Trade housed at the National Archives. Ranging from 1815-1821, the bulk of the collection is correspondence sent and received by Michigan territorial governor, Lewis Cass, regarding the Michigan superintendency. Major issues discussed are the licensing of British subjects for trade with the Indians, the distribution of annuities established by Indian treaties and the handling of other public moneys by Indian agents, the issuance of commodities (such as bread, beef, and corn) to the Indians, the nature of treaty making and the interpretation of treaties, and actions of the military against the Indians. There are references to General William Henry Harrison, the Treaty of Greenville, the Treaty of Fort Wayne and much discussion about the activities at Fort Wayne. The geographical focus of the collection is the state of Ohio, the territory and state of Indiana, the Michigan territory, and the Eel and Wabash Rivers. Native American tribes mentioned in the correspondence include the Potawatomi, Ottawa, Chippewa, Wyandotte, Delaware, Shawnee, Seneca, Miami, Weaw, and Kickapoo. Correspondence in the collection also relates information about the consolidation of Indiana agencies and the personnel disputes.

Correspondents included in collection:

John C. Calhoun, Lewis Cass, William H. Crawford, D. (Daniel) Curtis, A.(Alexander) J. Dallas, George Graham, Jonathan Jennings, John Johnston, Charles Jouett, John Kinzie, Charles Larned, Thomas L.

McKenney, James Monroe, B.F.(Benjamin Franklin) Stickney, Dr. William Turner, John R. Walker, W.W. Walker, Major J.(John) Whistler, Abraham R. Woolley.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a records transfer from the Indiana Historical Bureau on 1944/10/18.

Accruals

No further additions are expected.

Processing Information

Collection processing completed 1999/07/29 by Philip N. Williams. Collection reprocessed 2017/03/20 by Laura Eliason. Finding aid created 1999/07/29 by Philip N. Williams. EAD finding aid created 2017/03/20 by Laura Eliason.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Geographic Name(s)

- Fort Wayne (Ind.)

Personal Name(s)

- Calhoun, John C.
- Turner, Dr. William

Subject(s)

- Indians of North America--Government relations

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Correspondence, 1815 Jan.-1816 May	1	1
Correspondence, 1816 June-1816 Dec.	1	2
Correspondence, 1817	1	3
Correspondence, 1818 Jan.-1818 May	1	4
Correspondence, 1818 June-1821 Mar.	1	5